

particularly in Colorado. The Business Women's Network (BWN), which is a network of 1200 women's associations working in concert to expand all women's inclusion in business development, is helping towards that end. Tonight, the BWN will be hosting an event to honor its members and the many structures which serve the development of women's business.

Colorado enterprises which embody well-developed and successful business ventures include: the Colorado Women's Business Office, which represents more than 75,000 women and 50,000 girls; the Denver Women's Business Network; the Casa Career Development and Business Center for Women; the Southern Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce; the University of Colorado Women's Resource Center; the Women Owner, Managers and Executive Network of Colorado Springs; the Women's Foundation of Colorado; the Women's Library Association in Denver, and many others. Colorado's success in identifying and nurturing a strong base of women owned businesses provides a model for other states seeking to conquer the spectrum of needs and obstacles that confront women entrepreneurs.

National recognition is in order. Last year, the women-owned businesses in the Denver metro area had the highest regional growth rate in the country, at 57%. Both employment and sales increased four-fold. The translation for Coloradans is easy. As a state, we enjoy more than 77,600 women-owned businesses that provide jobs for almost 208,000 people, to the tune of \$23 billion in annual sales.

The Business Women's Network is important because it profiles all women's groups, both nationally and globally, in salute of their achievements. Today, I wish to single out for special honor the solid foothold women's business has in Colorado's unparalleled economy. I also want to encourage the continued efforts of BWN—the strong presence of women in our world economy cannot be emphasized enough.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION VA CENTER—60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital and Regional Office Center of White River Junction, Vermont. October 16 marks this facility's sixtieth anniversary. For six decades it has provided compassionate, high-quality service to Vermont and New Hampshire Veterans.

On October 16, 1938, an elaborate dedication ceremony was held in White River Junction at the newly completed VA hospital. The next day, the first patient was admitted. In an unusual move, the regional VA office relocated its offices from Burlington to the White River Junction location to better serve veterans in processing their claims for benefits. The facility gradually grew over the years. By the end of

World War II, 26 "Quonset" huts had to be erected to provide space for the rapidly expanding veterans programs, increasing the hospital's capacity to 250 beds.

In 1946, the VA hospital entered into an agreement with Dartmouth Medical School to become a teaching hospital, an arrangement that continues and thrives today. Recognizing the importance of research programs, in 1954, the VA, in partnership with Dartmouth Medical School, launched a medical research initiative. The research function was significantly expanded in 1992 with the completion of a research and education facility that enabled the hospital to perform medical and health services research, rehabilitation and cooperative studies. In addition to these critical fields of study, this facility is helping veterans make more informed choices about their medical treatment through cutting edge outcomes research.

From 1971 through 1981, several construction projects were undertaken to modernize and expand the hospital. In 1989, the VA began its venture of providing community-based outreach centers (CBCs) to meet veterans' primary care needs in locations closer to their homes. A outreach clinic was opened in Burlington, and based on the success of this project, a community clinic was opened in Bennington earlier this year.

The White River Junction VA center has also done an exemplary job of meeting more than just the veterans' health care needs. Vermont veterans are also very fortunate to have, under the same roof, a very capable group of people to assist them with their benefit needs. The staff is small but mighty when it comes to their advocacy for veterans and I greatly appreciate the assistance they have provided Vermont veterans, for more than half a century, as well as to my office for the past 20 years.

In closing, Mr. President, I want to publicly thank all of the unsung heroes associated with this tremendous facility. They know who they are—the director of this facility, Gary DeGasta; the dedicated staff at the hospital and regional office; the Veterans Service Organizations who donate so much time and money to help provide for veterans; and, of course, the veterans, who for 60 years have supported the mission of this fine facility with their continuous patronage.

To my friends at the VA in White River Junction—Happy Anniversary. May you have many more.

IN SUPPORT OF SUBSTITUTE TO H.R. 3433

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the amendment in the form of a substitute to H.R. 3433.

Many people with disabilities who have been out of the workforce are eager to return to work. However, because of the risks of losing cash benefits and health insurance provided

through the Social Security Disability Insurance program and the Supplemental Security Income program many beneficiaries are discouraged from entering or re-entering the workforce. The intent of these programs was never to demoralize or dishearten Americans who are ready, willing and able to work. We must look at ways to overcome this attitude.

Thanks to the disability reform proposal developed by Senator JEFFORDS and Senator KENNEDY many of the barriers facing people with disabilities will be addressed. Several provisions in the Jeffords-Kennedy substitute to H.R. 3433 tackle the problems of loss of cash benefits and health insurance which can prevent beneficiaries from being able to support themselves once they begin working. The substitute legislation would provide working individuals with disabilities access to additional services under the Medicaid program, such as personal assistance and prescription drugs. These services are vital to many people on SSDI and SSI. Furthermore, this proposal would provide improved access to rehabilitation opportunities for beneficiaries of both the SSI and SSDI programs.

The most encouraging parts of this proposal are those that eliminate work disincentives and facilitate self-sufficiency among those with disabilities. This legislation prohibits using work activity as the only basis for triggering a continuing disability review. Moreover, the proposal put forth by my colleagues, Senator JEFFORDS and Senator KENNEDY, would expedite the process of eligibility determinations of individuals who have been on disability insurance but who lost it because they were working. Also, the Jeffords-Kennedy substitute creates incentives for both disabled beneficiaries and providers of vocational rehabilitation to secure jobs for those who want to work. It is my hope that this will eliminate shuffling these people from vocational rehabilitation programs to state programs without them being able to make any real progress.

Finally, I want to say how glad I am to see that a component of the Jeffords-Kennedy substitute includes a proposal to ensure that local prisoners will not receive Social Security Disability Insurance benefits. I sponsored legislation in the beginning of the 105th Congress to prevent this needless waste of taxpayer dollars by closing a loophole in the law. Criminals should not be allowed to "double dip" and receive Federal money earmarked for the purchase of food and clothing while they are part of a prison system which provides these necessities already. This proposal would protect the financial soundness of the Social Security Disability Insurance program for the people it is meant to assist.

The work Senator JEFFORDS and Senator KENNEDY have put forth on this bill characterizes the bipartisanship necessary to pass the proposal into law. I am glad to lend my support to

the Senate substitute legislation to H.R. 3433. I look forward to passage of this legislation.

ADDRESSING READINESS ISSUES

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to proposed increases in military spending contained in the supplemental appropriations provisions for FY 1999, and to comment on even larger anticipated proposals for increases in the military budget for fiscal year 2000 and beyond that will be the subject of ongoing debate in Washington in the coming months.

I have always been a strong supporter of our men and women in uniform, and I believe we must provide the best possible training, equipment, and preparation for our military forces, so they can effectively carry out whatever peacekeeping, humanitarian, war-fighting, or other missions they are given. But certain Republican proponents of increased defense spending here in Washington are trying to use an alleged "readiness crisis" to get \$1 billion or more additional funding included in the omnibus appropriations bill to be considered before adjournment. And this is just the first step. Some Pentagon officials, and Republican defense hawks here in Congress, are reportedly already pressing the Administration to increase next year's budget request by up to \$15 billion, and by an estimated \$50-75 billion over the next five years. These numbers are in addition to the grossly wasteful and unnecessary military spending of recent years, much of which was over and above what the Pentagon itself had requested from Congress to complete its mission.

These large increases are unjustified. Yes, I recognize that to a certain extent there are problems with readiness. There are shortages of spare parts in some areas, for example. It is reportedly difficult to retain pilots and other key personnel; certain of our armed forces, especially enlisted personnel, are suffering a declining quality of life. But if we look carefully at the military budget we can see that these readiness problems are not caused by inadequate military budgets, but rather by a wasteful and irresponsible, often politically-motivated misallocation of existing defense dollars to military programs and projects in states of key members of Congress. This is the crux of the matter. There is more than sufficient funding in the current budget to fix these problems if priorities are reassessed and money is redirected from wasteful and obsolete weapons programs to crucial readiness measures.

We continue to pour billions into Cold War era weapons programs that are essentially massive pork projects for the states and districts of various members of Congress. Congress has also contributed to the readiness problems by refusing to close military bases which the Pentagon acknowledges are unneeded and obsolete, and

has pressed to have closed. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and his colleagues on the Joint Staff, testified to this recently before the Armed Services Committee—they effectively said if you want us to fix these problems, then stop ramming down our throats weapons systems, ships and planes that we don't need, don't want, and haven't requested—and start closing down antiquated or outdated military bases that we can no longer afford to maintain, for which there is no reasonable purpose.

Mr. President, as I've said, I believe in maintaining a strong national defense. We face a number of credible threats in the world today, including terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But let's make sure we carefully identify the threats we face and tailor our defense spending to meet them. Let's not continue to maintain military spending based on the needs of the Cold War.

Mr. President, we do not need to spend more on the military. We only need to spend what we have already allocated more intelligently and more honestly. We do not need to give more money to an already bloated Pentagon for wasteful pork projects when we have so many urgent problems in this country that need attention. We need to focus on adequate funding for the hundreds of domestic programs that protect the vulnerable; protect our lakes and streams; provide health care for the vulnerable elderly; and create expanded opportunities for the broad middle class, such as student loans and job retraining.

The real "readiness" crisis, Mr. President, is not in the military budget but in the readiness of the Congress to give up its attachment to wasteful pork projects, and in the readiness of Pentagon officials to make the hard choices about what programs are really necessary for the restructured military force we need to face the challenges of the 21st century. I expect that an omnibus bill will pass, and that some additional defense spending will be included in it for Bosnia and other needs. But I hope my colleagues will keep these concerns in mind as the defense spending debate moves forward next year.

I intend to press forward my efforts here in the Senate to make sure we more responsibly balance our defense and domestic priorities, by scaling back wasteful defense spending, and re-allocating existing military funds to address our readiness problems, so that we can invest more in the skills and intellect and character of our children; in basic health care for all; in decent education, affordable housing and jobs that can sustain families.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR DALE BUMPERS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, in these last few days of the 105th Congress, when I come to the floor, I often

look wistfully to the aisle just to my left here, where DALE BUMPERS has trod up and down yanking the microphone cord and dispensing wisdom for just about twenty-four years now. The other day he gave his last speech here, and it was brilliant—an eloquent and moving reminder of the best purposes of politics. But now I want to look back and pay tribute to my friend DALE BUMPERS for what he has done and what he has been for me, for the Senate, for his beloved Arkansas and for our country.

DALE BUMPERS was born in Charleston, Arkansas in 1925, and it's from that little town he first drew the values he has eloquently proclaimed on this floor for two and a half decades. In a small town in western Arkansas during the Depression, young DALE BUMPERS learned about human suffering and deprivation, learned to believe that it could be defeated and came to understand, on his father's knee, that the government could be a force for good in that struggle. He saw typhoid in his hometown and saw a New Deal program put an end to it. He saw rural electrification light the countryside, projects that made the water cleaner, the roads safer, he saw the WPA and he saw the tenacity, and the ingenuity and the sense of community of the American people. One day as a boy he went to the nearby town of Booneville and saw Franklin Roosevelt himself, and he heard his father tell him that politics is an honorable profession—he took all that to heart and we are all the richer for it. He sometimes says, as his father did, "When we die, we're going to Franklin Roosevelt."

In 1943, DALE BUMPERS joined the Marines. He shipped out to the Pacific and he expected to be a part of the invasion force that would hit the beaches of Japan. He did not expect to survive it. The invasion never came, but that experience made a profound impression on him. When I hear him speak about the Constitution, our Founding Fathers and the flag on this floor it is plain how that wartime experience helped him comprehend the true stakes of the constitutional debate, how it informed his notions of patriotism and his sense of what America means. When he returned from the service he got a first-rate education at the University of Arkansas and Northwestern University Law School, all paid for, he is quick to point out, by Uncle Sam under the GI bill. He has been returning the favor to the American people ever since.

DALE BUMPERS started his career as a country lawyer in Charleston, a very successful one by all reports, and he got a reputation around Arkansas, even if he was, as he says, "the entire membership of the South Franklin County Bar Association." As time went by, his practice grew, he took over his father's hardware store, he taught Sunday School and sang in the church choir and he and his wonderful wife Betty started a family. But he wasn't feeling complacent.